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BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

1960 ANNUAL REPORT

The Authority has intensified its efforts and undertaken steps to broaden the size and scope of the urban renewal program in Boston. With the active interest and public support of Mayor John F. Collins in November, 1960, applications were submitted to the Housing and Home Finance Agency for ten General Neighborhood Renewal Plans. Approval was received in December and assurance given by Commissioner David M. Walker for capital grant fund reservations in the amount of \$29,192,453, and for planning advance funds of \$2,037,250. There is detailed below a breakdown of the GNRP's:

<u>Project Number</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>
R-42(GN)	Charlestown	\$ 207,325.00
R-43(GN)	South End	293,700.00
R-44(GN)	East Boston	204,500.00
R-45(GN)	Downtown-North	182,300.00
R-46(GN)	Downtown	250,950.00
R-47(GN)	Back Bay	165,800.00
R-48(GN)	Parker Hill-Fenway	194,850.00
R-49(GN)	Jamaica Plain	220,225.00
R-50(GN)	Roxbury-North Dorchester	129,800.00
R-51(GN)	South Boston	<u>187,800.00</u>
	Total	<u>\$ 2,037,250.00</u>

Provision for General Neighborhood Renewal Planning was enacted by the Congress in September, 1959, in an amendment to the United States Housing Act of 1949. A Project embracing at

least 10 per cent of the Plan area must be undertaken promptly upon completion of the Plan and the preparation of the Urban Renewal Plan for the Project.

In order to carry out the surveys, plans and studies required in these areas, the Authority plans to expand the Planning Staff by recruiting over 100 professionally qualified planners and technicians, plus administrative personnel. This undertaking will result in Boston having the largest municipal renewal planning operation in this country.

Under Chapter 652, Acts of 1960, the City Planning Board was abolished, all its staff transferred to the Boston Redevelopment Authority, and the function, duties and responsibilities for general city planning assumed by the Authority.

Boston received certification from Administrator Norman P. Mason, HHFA, for 500 dwelling units under Sec. 221, FHA. It is hoped that new housing under this section may be constructed to provide for the relocation of families to be displaced by renewal projects in the months and years ahead.

Chapter 776, Acts of 1960, provides for State assistance to local communities to aid in carrying out urban renewal projects. Under this law, 50% of the local community's cost of carrying out a project will be paid by State. The Authority has made application to the State Housing Board for State-aid on the New York Streets and West End Projects.

A brief description of the status of each project presently being undertaken is given below.

New York Streets Project, UR Mass. 2-1

This project, the first undertaken by Boston under Title I of the Housing Act of 1949, has turned one of the city's most blighted and decadent areas into an attractive industrial park. Four new buildings have been erected on the site for the Boston Herald-Traveler Corp., Graybar Electric Co., Westinghouse Electric Co., and Transit Insurance Co., and construction of a new branch bank for one of Boston's oldest financial institutions is scheduled to start in 1961. In less than three years over 75% of the project area has been developed in accordance with the Plan and the future looks bright for the remaining 25% of the land.

West End Project, UR Mass. 2-3

New construction in two sections of the project area was started in 1960. The first section of cleared land, a 5-1/2 acre tract, was turned over to the redevelopers, Charles River Park, Inc., in March 1960. It is expected that the four residential buildings to contain some 480 apartments will be completed and ready for occupancy early in 1962. In June, 1960, the Retina Foundation broke ground on a 35,000 s.f. tract of land on Staniford Street for a new building to provide for the expanded

operations of the institution. Completion is scheduled for June, 1961. In October, 1960, the last of the 2573 families, residing on the site at the time of the taking, moved out of the area. In a period of 30 months, the Relocation Staff handled 2573 families and over 300 nonresidential establishments. Relocation payments totaling over \$320,000 under Sec. 106 (f) of the Housing Act have been made to former West End Site occupants as compensation for moving expense and personal property losses.

Whitney Redevelopment Area

In July, 1960, the Authority acquired by eminent domain the 7-1/2 acre tract of land bounded by St. Alphonsus, Tremont, Worthington Streets, Huntington Avenue and Longwood Avenue. Relocation of the 250 families started immediately and a demolition contract was awarded in September. New construction is scheduled to start in April, 1961 on the first of 3 high-rise apartment buildings, each of which will contain about 270 dwelling units. The new construction will be undertaken by private limited dividend corporation, operating under Chapter 121A of the General Laws. This project is being undertaken without Federal financial assistance. The City of Boston issued \$1,500,000 of bonds to finance the project execution. Under the terms of lease-hold agreement with the redevelopers, the City will recover all monies, plus existing tax revenues over a period of approximately 20 years. Boston has received commendation from many sources for

its forthright action in undertaking this project and for the expeditious manner in which it has been handled.

Government Center Project Mass. R-35

The Federal Government made available \$185,000 in September, 1960 under a Planning Advance contract to complete final plans for the Government Center project. It is expected that a redevelopment plan for this area will be ready early in 1961, and that the project may be put into execution in the fall. The Authority entered into an agreement with the General Services Administration for the sale of a 136,000 sq. ft. site for the construction of a new Federal Office Building. Legislation has been enacted to provide a new City Hall in the area to cost approximately \$20,000,000. This structure will replace the century old building on School Street. A complex of buildings for the Commonwealth has been authorized by legislation enacted in 1960. Over and beyond the public buildings proposed for the area, there will be private development for office and commercial space.

Washington Park Project, Mass. R-24

Planning for this renewal project started in August, 1960 with the execution of a Planning Advance Contract of \$143,461. Bounded by Townsend, Washington, Dudley Streets and Warren Avenue, this 186 acre tract will be Boston's first large scale effort at rehabilitation and conservation, with some necessary clearance of

existing structures. The planning studies should be completed in June, 1961, and an application for loan and grant contract submitted to the U. S. Housing and Home Finance Agency.

Prudential Center

Chapter 121A of the General Laws as amended by Chapter 652, Acts of 1960, has made it possible for the Prudential Insurance Co. to undertake steps which should result in the resumption of work on this project. Upon receipt of an application by the developer, the Authority will have to determine if the site is a "blighted open area" and approve a plan for the redevelopment of the area. This large undertaking will be the largest single construction project of its type in the United States. Consummation of the proposed plan will be a major step in sparking the construction and building trades industry, and the general economic welfare of the City.

Mattapan

The Authority has continued in its efforts to work out a feasible plan for the redevelopment of the predominately open land site between Cummins Highway and Almont Street in the Mattapan district. A New York development firm has submitted a proposal for the construction of three high-rise apartment buildings on a 20 acre site, the buildings to be set in a park-type area, covering less than 10% of the land and affording 100% parking. Further studies are being made to determine marketability for the new units.

